

THE BAKER COUNTY PRESS

84th Year, Vol. 36 | Winner of 11 state awards for journalism including General Excellence in 2012

2013 TOP STORIES

Local economy on the upswing

1 **JOEL ADDINGTON | NEWS EDITOR**
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With unemployment dropping to its pre-Great Recession level and the real estate market picking up steam, 2013 was a year for recovery from the economic woes of the past four years. The latest jobless figures from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity show Baker County's unemployment rate at 5.6 percent in November and October, the same rate logged as the annual average for 2008 and sunnier than a year ago when it stood at 6.8 percent. This year also saw marked increases in the pace and price of land sales. Compared to 2012, property records show the number of sales or land transfers this year jumped 16.8 percent to 771 and the total value of sales rose a whopping 61.5 percent to \$49.6 million versus \$30.7 million last year. Meanwhile, the number of foreclosures being filed in Baker County is falling. During all of 2012, there were 202 foreclosures filed and to-date this year that figure is at 141 foreclosures, a change of 30 percent. Prior to the recession, in 2008, there were none. Commercial construction projects began popping up along with news about others coming down the pike. The newest big box retailer to Baker County — Tractor Supply

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Oldcastle fight is far from over

2 **JOEL ADDINGTON NEWS EDITOR**

Grabbing more headlines than perhaps any other new stories in 2013 was the plan by an international construction firm to mine sand from hundreds of acres in the southern county. Oldcastle Southern Group, the Tampa-based subsidiary to a conglomerate headquartered in Ireland, first approached the county back in 2012 about its proposal to pump about 2 million gallons of water per day from the Floridan Aquifer for use in mining with a hydraulic dredge. The project could last up to 50 years, but the water would only be needed for the first few years of the project, Oldcastle officials said. But it wasn't until last summer that the county commission finally voted on the plan,

deciding 4-1 against granting a special exception to permit mining on the agriculturally-zoned tract east of SR 228 a few miles south of the interstate. The vote, with county commissioner Adam Giddens as the sole dissenter, came after a marathon public hearing that closed after 1:30 in the morning in July. In the months prior to the



PHOTO BY JOEL ADDINGTON
The Oldcastle sand mining hearing in July.

vote, Oldcastle's proposal was shifting and a public relations campaign was in full-swing. The company struck a deal

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Macclenny's face gets younger look

3 **JOEL ADDINGTON NEWS EDITOR**

The sign in front of city hall this year should've read "Under New Management." But maybe it didn't need to because all the other signs were there. Former city manager Gerald

Dopson, the city's top administrator for four decades, kicked off 2013 by announcing his retirement and recommending sitting city commissioner Phil Rhoden to replace him. The move by Mr. Dopson, 71, came a few months before six-term city commissioner Dr. Richard Johnson decided not to seek re-election in September triggering an election where three newcomers to public office vied to fill his vacancy. Clergyman and sheriff's department employee Sam Kitching defeated Macclenny real estate broker Dennis Collins and the chairman of the Republican Party of Baker County,

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Coaching shake up tops 2013 sporting news

See page 10



2013 SNAPS

PHOTO ABOVE BY JOEL ADDINGTON AND BELOW BY JUD JOHNSON
Above, Kristen Hilliard of Sanderson explains to a deputy she didn't believe she hit Wanda Dopson (lying at right) with her truck April 15. Below, friends, family and well wishers of vehicle accident victim Corey Craig (center) pray upon his return from rehab at an Atlanta hospital in early April. He was hurt in a December, 2012 single-truck crash that also took the life of Jordan Sommisse. The driver in the wreck, Austin Kight, was charged with vehicular homicide in August.



At top, city utility workers fix a blown pipe on S. 6th St. Below that, the late Tommy Johns is presented a jersey.

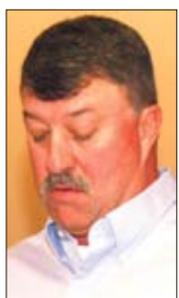


Below, a county firefighter rescues Christmas presents from a mobile home fire earlier this month. At left, Duck Dynasty star John Godwin delivers a talk at the fairgrounds.



A coin tosses Cecil Horne's way

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Cecil Horne

It was up to lady luck Monday night whether a substitute teacher or an electrical contractor would fill the open seat on the Macclenny City Commission. After two anonymous tie-votes in which two sitting commissioners voted for Alex Robinson of P&R Electric and two voted for Cecil Horne Jr., city attorney Frank Maloney

flipped a coin to determine who would replace the late Tommy Johns on the panel. The coin read tails when it landed on the floor, the side assigned to Mr. Horne, who start-

ed teaching in August. "I don't think the City of Macclenny can lose with who we get tonight," Commissioner Vernon Bennett said before the voting. "They're both God fearing men, which is the most important thing to me." Mr. Horne, 51, a former landscaper and ice machine technician and a graduate from Baker County High School, said he didn't want to select heads or tails on the coin flip because he wanted to leave the matter in God's hands. So Mayor Gary

Dopson made the call instead. Mr. Horne thanked the commissioners for putting their trust in him and added, "I'll do my best for the people of Macclenny." He was one of four applicants for the position, but two of them, Kirk Gravelle and Naomi Roberson, withdrew their names before the meeting. City Manager Phil Rhoden explained that Mr. Gravelle, the chairman of the Republican

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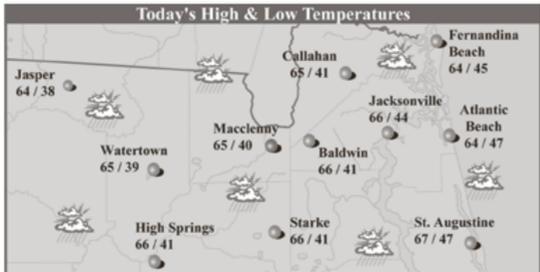
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The Baker County Press Weather

Seven Day Forecast table with columns for day, weather, high, and low.



Sun/Moon Chart This Week table with columns for Day, Sunrise, and Sunset.

St. Mary's River Levels and Hunting/Fishing Times tables.

Weather History table for Jan. 2, 1990, detailing precipitation and temperature.

Advertisement for Sam's Crystal River Seafood featuring a 20% off Tuesday & Wednesday after 4 pm offer.

2013: local economy upswing

From page 1. Co. — arrived last summer, revitalizing the Cornerstone Shopping Center on South 6th Street. The company renovated the roughly 25,000-square-foot space left vacant by Food Lion before opening its 46th store in the state with a dozen employees.

2013: Oldcastle fight far from over

From page 1. In June with the City of Maccleddy to accept some 800,000 gallons per day in treated wastewater from the city's plant, plus pay for installing the pipes to get the water to the 400-plus-acre project site.

Coach: woes off the playing field

4 Head Wildcat football coach Ryan Sulkowski's dinner at Whitey's Fish Camp in Fleming Island last February — and the deception and fallout that followed — was likely the most talked about saga of 2013 for several reasons.

The records also demonstrated that Mr. Sulkowski and the other coaches lied to their superiors about who was drinking and who was driving the district-owned vehicle they were using back to Baker County after the dinner.

BCCS: abruptly closed, but records are still a mystery

5 The abrupt closing of the now defunct Baker Community Counseling Services was notable not only because of the allegations about mismanagement that surrounded the organization's director and the roughly half-a-million dollars in state funding that changed hands.

BCS was performing a government function with taxpayer money. Case law supports that contention, according to The Press' legal counsel. BCCS supplied court-order drug and alcohol abuse counseling, anger management classes and the like for more than a decade here.

My Side of the Matter

That's a bad thing no matter how you look at it. Take the recent Duck Dynasty fiasco as a prime example. No matter which side of the fence you happened to be standing, the general knee jerk reactions from ... well ... knee jerks on both sides just made me shake my head. It was as if, instead of thinking through the issues involved and making an informed decision, folks just fired from the hip.

Heres a few more comments folks probably should have thought about more carefully. Someone asked the question on Twitter how it was that people found their way around on roads before MapQuest and Google Maps. You mean we always haven't had those? Didn't Columbus program the coordinates to the New World into his

COMMENT

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Letters are welcome, but must contain the signature of the writer, a telephone number and city of residence. Letters must reflect opinions and statements on issues of current interest to the general public.

CONTACT US By phone at 904.259.2400 or by fax at 904.259.6502. You can stop by our office located at 104 S. Fifth Street, Macclenny, FL or mail your submission to PO Box 598, Macclenny, FL 32063. We are available online at www.bakercountypress.com



Is social media making us dumber?

I'll be happy to welcome in the New Year; 2013 has been a challenge to say the least. I noticed something this year. I don't know whether social media is making people stupider, or it's just allowing us to revel in the stupidity of already dumb people that we didn't get to know before Facebook and Twitter.

wrote this one. "Did the Hunger Games really happen?" Why yes, and the prize was a trip to Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory. Here's a budding Twitter mathematician. "If the world isn't 2,013 years old then why is it 2013?" It's a mystery to me. My niece Savannah is having twins. I hope for her sake that this question from the Twitterverse isn't yes. "It takes nine months to have a baby. Is it 18 months for twins?"

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor: As a resident of Baker County for the past 21 years, as well as previously in the 70's, I have long been a proponent of this county remaining rural. The benefits of this far outweigh the alternative. There are many in this community that believe we need to look outside our county for help in providing for our county's needs. While the need to provide employment opportunities for our citizens is of major importance, this can be accomplished thru a concerted effort by both county and city governments fostering growth from its many talented citizens within this county.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

There are several Baker County citizens presently owning and operating businesses outside our county. Their business taxes and employees are all going to those outside counties. The citizens of Baker County are its greatest resource, one that is continuously squandered. The county can foster growth quite simply by offering all city and county contracts first to businesses in Baker owned and operated by Baker County residents. Of course growth will be slow, but as businesses grow with these county and city contracts they will also expand to other contracts outside our county and begin to take on new employees to fill those needs. These businesses will foster other businesses and the tax base will begin to grow.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Key areas where county can blossom by developing within

during activities such as the Olustee Battle Reenactment, Pioneer Days and other events throughout the county. The Annual Christmas Parade: An opportunity squandered each year. While a great majority of Baker County citizens turn out for the event during the day and evening, opportunity is lost when advertising is not done to outside counties, via internet, newspapers, radio and TV. Outside visitors that come to Baker County will spend money both at the event and at the businesses near the interstate and along the major thoroughfares. Coordinating with businesses such as Rudolph's Christmas Tree farm, Franklin Mercantile, the Glen Nursery, the Heritage Park, events etc. is a way to bring in visitors to the county as well.

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Advertisement for 'GOT COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS, SUGGESTIONS, STORY IDEAS' with contact information.

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2013 TOP STORIES



PHOTO BY JIM MCGAULY

Eight die on county roads in 2013

Eight people, including four in one accident, died on Baker County roads during 2013, two more than in the previous year. The most costly accident in terms of human life (photo above) in recent years occurred the morning of Veteran's Day when a 2009 Toyota crossed the center line of US 90 just east of Baker Correctional in the west county and collided with an eastbound 2004 Ford SUV. The Ford overturned on impact and caught fire, killing two Lake City women, ages 85 and 68. The driver, 55, was pulled from the wreckage by Deputy Daryl Mobley and survived. Both occupants of the Toyota, the 31-year-old male driver and a 31-year-old female passenger, died on impact. Two more Lake City residents, a man and wife ages 60 and 58, died at the perilous US 90 and Interstate 10 interchange on July 5 when their westbound Ford was clipped by a UPS truck exiting the interstate from the eastbound ramp. Their 3-year-old grandson survived. A survey by the Florida Department of Transportation found that 62 accidents occurred at the interchange since 2010, resulting in 21 injuries and another fatality. Pedestrian Allen Moore, 43, of Baldwin died when struck by a car while walking on Lowder St. in west Macclenny on April 5. Angel Rodriguez, 33, of Macclenny died when he lost control of his eastbound motorcycle on Interstate 10 just east of SR 228 on November 29.

Slumping ICE count curbed jail revenue, hiked local costs

6 JOEL ADDINGTON
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The county jail, which of course doubles as a holding tank for illegal immigrants who run afoul of the law, had a bumpy year with Congress at a budgetary stalemate for most of 2013.

The lack of grand bargain on federal spending triggered across-the-board budget cuts in the spring that reduced spending on federal agencies, including the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, a division of the cabinet level Department of Homeland Security.

In the months following the so-called sequestration cuts, the number of immigration detainees being housed at the facility dropped significantly, causing the nonprofit corporation which owns the 500-plus bed jail, the Baker Correctional Development Corporation, to lose hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue.

The average daily population of ICE prisoners hit its lowest point of the 2012-13 fiscal year in July at 152 inmates. Overall, the average population, including local inmates, was 386 for the fiscal year that ended September 30, below the roughly 400 prisoners BCDC official say they need to stay current on the \$45 million it bonded to build the facility, which opened in 2009.

The project was billed by Sheriff Joey Dobson and others as one that could be a source of revenue for the county budget. In fact, the opposite has happened. The county's bill for housing its inmates at the new facility has grown to about \$4 million with the roughly \$85 per inmate per day rate.

That's almost twice the rate at the old, shop-worn jail the sheriff's office left in 2009. The former facility has since been partially rehabilitated as a holding facility for defendants awaiting court hearings at the county courthouse.

BCDC has extended a small discount to the county for paying up front for housing local inmates, but the county commission also agreed to pay a big bill — about \$114,000 — for medical care of local inmates.

"Do I want to pay it? No. Do I think we should pay it, yes, and I hate it," said Commissioner Gordon Crews in August.

Nonetheless, the county has a new sheriff's administration facility adjoining the county jail, a complex that the county will inherit once the bonds are paid off during the coming two decades.

And should BCDC fail to meet

its debt obligations, the county is not liable financially, according to a recent opinion from the new county attorney, Rich Kommando, who replaced Terry Brown when he resigned from the post last summer due to medical problems.

County commissioners feared that language in an agreement with BCDC calling for the county to make its best efforts to ensure the bond money is repaid with interest, should BCDC go into default, could put the county on the hook to make investors whole.

Mr. Kommando said last November that after reviewing all the bond documents related to the detention center project, they "in no way impose liability on the county — even if the payment of those bonds is defaulted on."

In other notable news from the year:

• Baker County's mostly volunteer fire department got a new chief in Steven Marfongella in late June. Mr. Marfongella replaced former county fire chief Richard Dolan, who retired this year.

• Construction got underway this year on two new bridges at Green's Creek on CR 229 and Cedar Creek on CR 127. Both were damaged during 2012's Tropical Storm Debby.

• Former school board member Jesse Davis resigned his post late this summer after taking a new job in the Atlanta area. The governor's office has yet to name

a replacement to fill the vacant seat, though three people have applied — Naomi Roberson, Chuck Brannan and Leonard Davis.

• The foster home for troubled youth in the north county, Camp Tracey, shut its doors in October after more than three decades of operation.

• The Sons of Union Veterans' proposal to place a battlefield monument at Olustee Battlefield State Park sparked an uproar this fall from the Sons of Confederate Veterans and United Daughters of the Confederacy, who argue the area is hollowed ground and should not be altered. The proposed monument remains under consideration by state officials.

• Keller Intermediate School and Baker County Middle School saw one-letter-grade drops in their respective school grades this year.

Keller moved from a C-school to a D-school while the middle school lost the A-rating its had for six straight years.

The high school maintained its B-grade from last year.

• The top teachers in the district were named in February. They were eighth grade science teacher Jennifer Richardson, who was named the district-wide teacher of the year, Macclenny Elementary's Jennifer Mitchell, the high school's Leigh Ann Hays, Westside Elementary's Scott Wendel and the Pre-K-Kindergarten Center's Daphne Hand.

Macclenny: faces got younger in 2013

From page 1
Kirk Gavell, with 51.55 percent of the 677 votes cast. The margin was enough to avoid a run-off election with the second place candidate, Mr. Gravelle.

City commissioners appointed Macclenny resident and teacher Mark Bryant, who served on the city's Zoning Adjustment Board for 10 years, to fill Mr. Rhoden's seat on the panel in May.

He did not draw an opponent in the September election, nor did 14-year commissioner Tommy Johns, who died at age 75 in November following a stroke that placed him in a nursing home.

City commissioners decided this week to appoint Cecil Horne Jr. to serve for the remainder of Mr. Johns' term (see related story).

There were other big changes in city government this year as well, including a revitalization effort and new manager for Heritage Park.

Michele Hodges took the reins and began planning a series of special events at the park beginning with one modeled after the popular PBS series *Antiques Road Show* in May.

Though most of the events, including holiday-themed activities before Halloween and Christmas, required attendees pay a

'Fed' wife sand, rocks

Deputies arrested both a husband and wife following a physical clash in front of a residence on North Lowder in Macclenny the evening of December 23.

George Church, 51, told Deputy Jeremiah Johnson that Dorothy Church, 42, tossed a beer can that struck him in the head when he turned into their driveway about 8 pm. She then began arguing with him, and Mr. Church said he took her to the ground, held her down and vowed, "I'm gonna teach you a lesson."

Mrs. Church told the deputy that "lesson" involving shoving sand and rocks into her mouth.

She said they had been arguing all day and admitted to throwing the beer can but said it did not land on its target. Deputy Johnson said Mrs. Church had bruising around her mouth and sand on her back and inside her mouth.

A witness affirmed the beer can did strike Mr. Church, and that he held her down while forcing the sand and gravel into her mouth.

Both parties were booked for domestic battery.

In other incidents over the Christmas holiday, an argument that escalated into violence the afternoon of December 26 resulted in a criminal complaint filed against Fate Holy, 36, of for choking girlfriend Eilene Combs, 34, as they rode in her vehicle. They both have Baldwin addresses.

Ms. Combs said her boyfriend refused to let her out of her Subaru

zuku as he drove it south on 6th Street about 4:45, then traveled west on Woodlawn Road while grabbing her around the neck.

She broke free at the intersection with CR 125 and went to the nearby Citgo station to hide in a bathroom until a friend arrived. Deputy Marc Heath noted bruising around her neck consistent with her version.

Mr. Holy dropped her vehicle off on Grishmill St. and left the area.

• Deputy Michael Clark filed a similar complaint naming ex-boyfriend Theron Walker Jr., 38, of Macclenny for an attack on Tina Waltman, 31, of Glen outside Mac's Liquors late on December 28.

Mr. Walker sped off in a 2008 Ford and headed eastbound on Ohio Ave, running several stop signs as he eluded Deputy Jeremiah Combs before fleeing on foot from his mother's residence at 2nd and Ohio streets.

• In a previously unreported incident, Chealsy Johnson, 20, was arrested for domestic battery on boyfriend James Rhoden Jr., 24, outside their residence on CR 229 South the morning of December 16.

The couple admitted to Deputy John Minkel an argument started over the boyfriend neglecting to purchase cigarettes,

then escalated to a scuffle on the ground during which the accused struck and scratched him.

• Complaints were filed against both a mother and daughter following a physical confrontation at their Islomrada Drive address in east Macclenny the evening of December 23. They told Deputy Minkel the argument began after the mother, 42, took possession of a cell phone used by the 14-year-old daughter.

• Complaints for simple battery were filed naming Tara Washington, 41, for striking Willie Graham Sr., 53, during an argument at a family Christmas party on MLK Dr. in Macclenny the evening of December 23.

• Mikeya Washington, 19, was named for the same offense for allegedly spitting on a 17-year-old juvenile male during the same incident.

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Coach's house is invaded

The value of property taken from a north Sanderson residence during an evening burglary on December 28 was placed at a minimum of \$1285.

Charles Ruise called police when he returned about 10:30 to find his home on Tony Givens Rd. was entered through a broken front bedroom window. Mr. Ruise is the varsity basketball coach at Baker County High School.

The inventory of stolen property given to Deputy Jeremiah Johnson included a television, play station, DVD players, electronic tablet, space heater, laptop, athletic shoes and an undetermined amount in coins.

In other burglaries, Rodrick Brown returned to his residence on Annie Mae Paige Rd. north of Sanderson in the early morning Christmas Eve to find it had been entered through a damaged front door.

Mr. Brown told Deputy Michael Clark he was away from the residence since about 5 pm the previous day, and it appeared items inside had been moved around and rummaged through. Nothing appeared to be missing, however.

• Charles Bevan called police when he realized on December 26 that a chain saw was missing from a garage at his residence on Pine Ave. in Macclenny.

He told Deputy Jacob Satterwhite a weeder was stolen from the garage about three months ago. The tools had a combined value of \$285.

• It appears an outside central air conditioning unit behind PRN Scrub Boutique on South 6th St. was damaged when struck by a backing vehicle.

Store owner Kristen Haddock called police when she realized the unit valued at \$100 had been knocked askew. Deputy Trey McCullough said the vehicle collision was likely due to the nature of the damage and paint residue.

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Pistols taken from 2 vehicles

County deputies were called to investigate two separate incidents of theft of pistols from vehicles, one of them left on the roadside east of Macclenny on December 22 with a flat tire.

Shakeria Harmon of Macclenny told Deputy Jacob Satterwhite she returned to her 2003 Mazda about 3 o'clock that afternoon to find a small rear window had been broken out and a 9 mm handgun and some personal items missing.

Ms. Harmon said the firearm belonged to her ex-boyfriend, also of Macclenny, and that other property taken from the vehicle made her suspect he may be responsible.

The officer was unable to make contact with the possible suspect.

Ms. Harmon left the car on the side of US 90 near Enterprise Dr. about 10 am.

In the second case, Robert Parker reported on December 26 that his .380 pistol was missing from the trunk of his vehicle, and suggested to Deputy Thomas Dyal that his estranged wife may be responsible. The vehicle was parked at his residence on Benie Givens Ct. north of Sanderson.

The officer stopped the suspect, who is on probation, to question him and two acquaintances, ages 20 and 21, as they walked along US 90 downtown near South 6th about 12:45 pm.

The youth said he was en route to his probation officer, and after Deputy Simpkins learned the office was closed he contacted the officer who authorized the arrest. The boy was released to parents.

• Mark Belford, 46, of Macclenny was arrested early on December 28 for trespassing at Mac's Liquors downtown after being warned to stay away.

Deputy Jeremiah Combs responded to a call about 1 am after Mr. Belford allegedly became unruly while at an outdoor patio and refused to leave. The officer said he was unsteady on his feet and Mr. Belford insisted he was "just coming to get a drink."

• Deputy John Minkel arrested Michael Cook, 24, of Jacksonville at an address on Adams Rd. southwest of Macclenny the afternoon of December 22.

Mr. Cook was wanted in Duval County for violating probation for battery, and officers learned earlier of his presence in the area.

• John Perry, 19, of Macclenny was already in jail for battery when he was served on December 23 with a Baker County warrant for violation of probation for grand theft of a firearm and trafficking in stolen property.

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Shoplifting on Christmas Eve

A criminal complaint for misdemeanor shoplifting was filed on Christmas Eve against a Macclenny woman caught trying to leave Walmart with a \$200 electric-powered child's car.

Jacqueline Hollings, 20, placed the Corvette model toy in a shopping cart and went to the customer service counter briefly before she headed for the store exit shortly after 5 pm, a store security worker told Deputy Daryl Mobley.

The suspect admitted to shoplifting then offered to pay for the toy, an offer routinely declined by Walmart as against store policy.

The incident was referred to the state attorney's office for prosecution.

In other incidents, an attempt was made to contact a Starke woman whose children allegedly stole stickers, decals, gloves and caps from Macclenny Cycle and Marine on December 26.

Store owner Steve Williams told Deputy Thomas Dyal he noticed the items missing after the mother and three children ranging in age from 3-15 left the store about 3 pm. The mother purchased a tire and a tube.

Mr. Williams said he caught the youngest child removing a security tape from one piece of merchandise while the mother was making the purchases. Value of the stolen items was placed at \$80.

• Deputy Jacob Satterwhite was contacted on December 22 by a 34-year-old former Macclenny resident who noticed his credit card number was used to make several purchases from a toy store in Brooklyn, NY earlier that day.

The debits to his account totaled \$300. The complainant is in the military stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C.

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Obituaries must be submitted in a timely fashion and have a local connection. Pictures are printed with obituaries free of charge. The newspaper reserves the right to publish photos based on quality. It is requested that all news items be typed or emailed to insure accuracy in print.

Maynard Alford, 70, retired truck driver

Edward Ray "Maynard" Alford, 70, of Glen St. Mary, died on December 29, 2013 at St. Vincent's Medical Center. He was born in Sanderson on June 18, 1943 to the late Son Alford and Evelyn Davis. Maynard was a lifelong resident of Baker County and a longtime member of the Dinkins New Congregational Methodist Church. He served in the United States Navy and retired after many years of dedicated service as driver for Kennedy Trucking.



Edward Alford

Mr. Alford enjoyed hunting, fishing and spending time with his family. He loved his children and grandchildren dearly. Maynard was preceded in death by his loving wife of 35 years, Deborah Iris Alford; brother Cecil Alford; sister Carolyn Price; and grandson Jason.

Maynard is survived by his loving children Patsi (Marty) Kelly, Tony Ray (Veronica) Alford, Teresa Alford Jordan, Jon Theophilie, Frank Theophilie, Thomas Edward (Kelly) Alford and Brandi Ray Estep; his sister Virginia Ann Musgrove; 24 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

The funeral service will be held on Wednesday January 1 at 2 pm at his church with pastor Tim Alford and Allen Crews officiating. Interment will follow at Cedar Creek Cemetery. The family will receive friends from noon until the time of the service. Ferreira Funeral Services of Macclenny is in charge of arrangements.

Euell Rhoden, 86, of Riverview, FL dies

Euell Rhoden, 86, of Riverview, FL died on December 18, 2013. He was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church for 40 years, and an avid hunter and fisherman. He was preceded in death by daughter Milinda Baxley and was a native of Baker County, the son of the late Raiford and Ethel Rhoden.



Euell Rhoden

Euell is survived by his loving wife of 46 years, Donna of Riverview; children Jack Euell (Sharon) Rhoden of Tavares, Wayne D. Rhoden of Tampa and Julie Rhoden (Charlie) Rhodie of Valrico, FL; brother Amos Rhoden of Macclenny and Verree Greene of Jacksonville; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

The funeral service was held on Monday, December 23 at 10:30 am at his church. Mr. Rhoden was laid to rest at Garden of Memories. Memorial donations may be made to Immanuel Lutheran Church.

Alan Fisher of Macclenny dies at age 86

Alan Avery Fisher, 86, of Macclenny died on Tuesday, December 17, 2013. Originally from Corning, New York, Mr. Fisher lived in Macclenny for the last 40 years. He was an avid ham radio enthusiast who loved spending time in his flower and vegetable gardens, building clocks, listening to music and enjoying his family and friends.

Mr. Fisher was preceded in death by his loving wife Martha last year. He is survived by daughter Marty (Steve) Hall-Arrant of Glen St. Mary; four grandsons; eight great-grandchildren and a very special friend Doug Quick.

The family will hold a private memorial service at a later date. Forbes Funeral Home of Macclenny was in charge of arrangements.

Sandra Hardee dies on December 26, longtime BCSO employee

Sandra Antoinette Hardee, 65, of Lake City died on Thursday, December 26, 2013 at Baptist Medical Center South in Jacksonville following a long illness. She was born in Orlando and resided in Ocala and Jacksonville before moving to Lake City in 1968. She was formerly employed with the Florida Highway Patrol, the Marion County Clerk's Office and the Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission before retiring as a records supervisor with the Baker County Sheriff's Office in 2013 with 20 years of service. She was a graduate of Paxton High School in Jacksonville and was preceded in death by parents Tenille Anthony and Dorothy Roberta Baker Sutton; sister Barbara A. Melton and brother Tenille S. "Rusty" Sutton.



Sandra Hardee

Survivors include her daughter Windy Gayle of Lake City and son Shane Durrance of Houston, TX; sisters Debra S. (Jack) Franks of Jacksonville and Sheri A. (Eddie) Yule, FL; brother Steven A. (Beverly) Sutton of Macclenny; grandchildren, Shana, Kailey, Madison and Makenzie.

The funeral service for Mrs. Hardee was held at 2 pm on Monday, December 30 at the Baker County Sheriff's Department Complex in Macclenny with Rev. Randy Williams, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Glen St. Mary officiating. Interment followed at the Gethsemane Memorial Gardens in Jacksonville. Guerry Funeral Home of Macclenny was in charge of arrangements.

Funeral Tuesday for 'Clint' Johnson, 48

Allen Clinton "Clint" Hubert Johnson, 48, of Sanderson died Friday, December 27, at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Jacksonville following a long illness. He was born in Jacksonville and resided in Sanderson for 28 years. He was employed as a security guard with Allied Barton Security for eight years until ill health forced his retirement.

Mr. Johnson was a successful Little League baseball coach and Pop Warner football coach for Baker County youth sports. He was a graduate of Temple Christian School in Jacksonville, class of 1983. He enjoyed hunting and fishing and was a member of the Don't Linger Lingo Hunting Club of Sylvania, Ga.

He is survived by wife Jerrie N. Johnson; daughter Jessica (Dustin) Williams and son Ben Johnson, all of Sanderson; mother Nancy (Chuck) Clark of Macclenny; father Joe (Hester) Johnson of Macclenny; granddaughters Whitley Williams and Paisley Williams, both of Sanderson; sister Angie (Rick) Crews of Glen St. Mary; mother-in-law Sandy Dugger of Sanderson.

A graveside funeral service was conducted at 11 am on Tuesday, December 31 at Cedar Creek Cemetery in Sanderson with Rev. Fred Raulerson, pastor of Pine Level Church, officiating. Guerry Funeral Home of Macclenny was in charge of arrangements.

CONTACT US

By phone at 904.259.2400 or by fax at 904.259.6502. You can stop by our office located at 104 S. Fifth Street, Macclenny, FL or mail your submission to PO Box 598, Macclenny, FL 32063. We are available online at www.bakercountypress.com

Funeral for James Johnson held Tuesday

James M. Johnson, 62, of Macclenny died on Friday, December 27, 2013 after a courageous battle with cancer. A Baker County resident since 1979, Mr. Johnson was a twenty-five year employee of Industrial Steel Fabricators and most recently was a welder at Whitley Steel in Maxwell. He was a member of the Dawkins Masonic Lodge #60 of Macclenny and enjoyed wood-working, grilling, gardening and fishing. He was a Christian and especially loved spending time at home with his family and friends.



James M. Johnson

He is survived by his wife Vanessa Johnson; sons Clayton (Brandy) Johnson of Gainesville and Nathan Johnson of Macclenny; daughter Kathy Johnson Lee of Macclenny; mother Hazel Pope of Jacksonville; brothers Leonard (Clara) Johnson Sr. of Lake City and Dale Johnson of Jacksonville; sisters Jeraldine (Frank) Waters and Rhonda (Steve) Holden, both of Jacksonville and Diane (James) Robinson of Jackson, GA; grandsons Colton and Brody Lee of Macclenny; numerous other family members and friends.

He was preceded in death by his father Maynor Johnson and sister: Loretha White.

The funeral service was held 11 am on Tuesday, December 31 in the chapel of Forbes Funeral Home in Macclenny with Reverend Gary Manning officiating. Interment followed at Riverside Memorial Park in Jacksonville.

Funeral Tuesday for Marcus Raulerson

Marcus Lewis Raulerson Sr., 27, of Macclenny died on December 25, 2013 at his residence. He was born in Jacksonville on April 30, 1986 to James (Ron) Raulerson and Toni Hays Raulerson. Mr. Raulerson was a lifelong resident of Macclenny and a 2004 graduate of Baker County High School. He proudly served his country as a United States Marine war veteran.



Marcus Raulerson

Marcus was always willing to lend a helping hand to anyone in need. He was honest and straightforward, loved to hunt, fish, watch the Gators play football and above all, spend time with his children, wife and family. Marcus played football and baseball in high school and enjoyed spending time outdoors.

He is survived by his wife of nine years Brandi Nash Raulerson; children Marcus Lewis Raulerson Jr., MaKenzie Brooke Raulerson and MaKaylin Grace Raulerson; his parents; brothers Brad (Wendy) Raulerson of Fernandina Beach, George (Nicole Buettner) of San Diego, Calif., James Ryan (Cara) Raulerson of Norfolk, Virginia; grandmother Bernice Raulerson of Macclenny; father-in-law David (Maryam) Nash of Lake City; Mother-in-law; Tracey Nash of Wellborn; various other relatives including brothers and sisters-in-law, aunts, uncles and cousins.

The funeral service will be held on Tuesday December 31 at 2 pm at Raiford Road Church with pastors John A. Raulerson, Herman Rios and Dr. Timothy Pickering officiating. Interment will follow at Woodlawn Cemetery in Macclenny. V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services is in charge of arrangements.

Anthony Roberts funeral this Thursday

Anthony Glenn Roberts, 43, of Macclenny died on Saturday, December 28, 2013. A lifelong resident of Baker County, Mr. Roberts was a member of the Glen Hill Primitive Baptist Church. He was a United States Army veteran who proudly served in Operation Desert Storm. He enjoyed fishing and spending time with his family and friends.



Anthony Roberts

He is survived by his wife Judy Ann Roberts; sons Joshua (Jessie) Roberts of Hawaii, Blake Roberts, Blaine Roberts, and Hunter Roberts, all of Glen St. Mary; step-sons: Dustin Flick and Bradley Flick, both of Macclenny; step-daughter Karla (Wesley) Thomas of Raiford; father Glenn Roberts of Macclenny; mother Linda (Stanley) Monds of Glen St. Mary; brother Robbie Roberts of Macclenny; sisters Taryn (Ricky) Dugger of Glen St. Mary, Doree (Daryl) Mobley of Macclenny and Amy Roberts of Jacksonville; three grandchildren and numerous other family members. He was preceded in death by sisters Alicia Roberts and Tracy Lynn Roberts and step-brother Scotty Mond.

A funeral service will be held 2 pm, Thursday, January 2 at his church with Elder Arnold Johns officiating. Interment will follow at Oak Grove Cemetery. The family will receive friends at the church prior to the service starting at noon. Forbes Funeral Home of Macclenny is in charge of arrangements.

Heartfelt thanks

The family of Sandi Hardee would like to extend its heartfelt gratitude to the Baker County Sheriff's Office. The love and devotion demonstrated by the sheriff and his employees has been incredible and touching, and this support has meant very much to the relatives of Sandi during this difficult time. Sandi always regarded the Baker County Sheriff's Office as her extended family, and the quality of care and concern her family has received has truly exemplified that. We are humbled and forever indebted to you for the grace and kindness you have shown us.

We publish obituaries & pictures FREE! Thank you - \$6.00 (for 50 words)

DINKINS NEW CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH CR 127 N. of Sanderson Sunday School 10:00 am Sunday Morning Service 11:00 am Sunday Night Service 6:00 pm Wed. Night Service 7:30 pm Pastor Allen Crews Assistant Pastor Timothy Alford

MACCLENNY CHURCH OF CHRIST 573 S. 5th St. 259-6059 Sunday Bible Study 9:45 am Fellowship 10:30 am - 11:00 am Worship Services 11:00 am Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm Minister Sam E. Kitching

Sanderson Congregational Holiness Church CR 127 N., Sanderson, FL Sunday School 10:00 am Morning Worship 11:00 am Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 pm Wed. Evening Prayer Serv. 7:30 pm Pastor: Oral E. Lyons

Community Full Gospel Church 12664 Mud Lake Rd. Sunday School 10:00 am Sunday Morning 11:00 am Sunday Evening 6:00 pm Tuesday Evening 7:30 pm Pastor Tommy Richardson | 904-275-2949

CARTHAGE CHAPEL FUNERAL HOME, Inc. 929 W. Beaver St., Jacksonville (904) 354-0545 | (904) 354-0546 Kenneth Peele, Jr., LFD C.S.F.P. Pre-Need Counselor Embalmer & Notary

New Hope Church, Inc. 29-A to Lauramong Rd. & Fairgrounds Rd. Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Evening Services 5:00 p.m. Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m. Pastor J. C. Lauramore welcomes all

THE LORD'S CHURCH Intersection of CR 125 & 250 in Taylor • 259-8353 Sunday school ~ 10:00 am Sunday service ~ 11:00 am Wednesday night Bible Study ~ 6:30 pm Family style dinner - 1st Sunday of the month following service 'A church alive is worth the drive!'

First United Methodist Church Loving God Loving People Serving Our Community Come Join Us 93 N. 5th St. (SR228) Macclenny, FL ~ Sunday Worship 11am

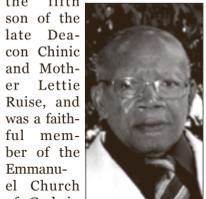
First Baptist Church of Sanderson CR 229 S., Sanderson FL Sunday School 10:00 am Sun. Morning Worship . . . 11:00 am Sun. Evening Worship . . . 6:00 pm Wed. Eve. Bible Study . . . 7:00 pm Dr. Roy Vining

Cremation starting at \$995 Burial Packages starting at \$4,395 Dignified Services ~ Value Pricing Please visit our website at www.GuerryFuneralHome.net for more pricing. Call Bill Guerry or J.D. Tyre. 259-2211 420 E. Macclenny Ave. GUERRY FUNERAL HOME

Christian Fellowship Temple 'A Place To Belong' Independent Pentecostal Church Have a Happy New Year! 2014 Jesus answered, 'Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' John 3:5

Funeral service on Saturday for Norman Ruise, 78

Deacon Norman Ruise of Sanderson, 78, died on Sunday, December 29, 2013. He was



Deacon Ruise

the fifth son of the late Deacon and Mother Lettie Ruise, and was a faithful member of the Emmanuel Church of God in Christ in Macclenny. He is survived by his loving wife of 60 years, Mother Mary Lee Ruise; children Eva (James) Parker of Montgomery, AL, Marilyn Jenkins of West Palm Beach, Norman Ruise of Sanderson, Freddie Ruise of Homestead, TX, Lydia Ruise and Carol Ruise of Sanderson; Bobby Ruise of Ocala, Robin (Stanley) Green of Jacksonville, Anthony Ruise of Sanderson, Angela (Mark) O'Berry of Middleburg, Sateria and Doneshia Ruise of Sanderson; and godson and daughter John and Audrey Kennedy, goddaughter Sakinah Farmer, special son Nolan Steward; 21 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren.

The funeral service for Deacon Ruise will be at 11 am on Saturday, January 4 at his church with Elder Joe Ruise officiating. Interment will follow at Quitman Cemetery, Sanderson. Cooper Funeral Home of Lake City was in charge of arrangements.

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated December 12, 2013, entered in Case No. 2013-CA-00016 of the Eighth Judicial Circuit in and for Baker County, Florida, wherein JIMMIE ALLEN CREWS and SHELLEY L. CREWS, ET AL., are Plaintiffs, and JIMMIE ALLEN CREWS and SHELLEY L. CREWS and COUNTRY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION are Defendants. The property described in the complaint is located at 339 East Macclenny Avenue, The Clerk's street address for auctions, at 11:00 AM (#113), on the 11th day of February, 2014 the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit: LOT 14, ROLLING MEADOWS, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Plat Book 3, Page(s) 96, 97, 98, 99, 100 and 101, of the Public Records of Baker County, Florida A/K/A: 5546 Huckleberry Trail W., Macclenny, Florida, 124, Macclenny, FL 32063

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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA CASE NO. 2013-CA-00468 GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION

ROLLING MEADOWS OF MACCLENNY HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC., a Florida not for profit corporation, Plaintiff, vs. JIMMIE ALLEN CREWS and SHELLEY L. CREWS, ET AL., Defendants.

NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 45 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated December 12, 2013, entered in Case No. 2013-CA-00468 of the Eighth Judicial Circuit in and for Baker County, Florida, wherein ROLLING MEADOWS OF MACCLENNY HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC. is Plaintiff, and JIMMIE ALLEN CREWS and SHELLEY L. CREWS and COUNTRY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION are Defendants. The property described in the complaint is located at 339 East Macclenny Avenue, The Clerk's street address for auctions, at 11:00 AM (#113), on the 11th day of February, 2014 the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit: LOT 14, ROLLING MEADOWS, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Plat Book 3, Page(s) 96, 97, 98, 99, 100 and 101, of the Public Records of Baker County, Florida A/K/A: 5546 Huckleberry Trail W., Macclenny, Florida, 124, Macclenny, FL 32063

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NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated December 12, 2013, entered in Case No. 2013-CA-00016 of the Eighth Judicial Circuit in and for Baker County, Florida, wherein BECKER & POLJAKOFF, P.A. Attorneys for Plaintiff, Scott Kierman, Esq., Florida Bar #00131577 111 N. Orange Avenue Suite 1400 Orlando, FL 32801 (407) 875-0808 (407) 999-2209 Fax Primary: SKierman@lpjlegal.com Secondary: CLabonte@lpjlegal.com

SOCIAL NOTICE SUBMISSION INFORMATION
Birth announcements, wedding notices and social events (military service notes and school graduations) must be submitted within four weeks of the event. All news and advertising must be submitted to the newspaper office prior to 5:00 p.m. on the Monday prior to publication, unless otherwise noted or arranged. It is requested that all news items be typed or emailed to insure accuracy in print.

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Coin toss breaks O.C. Horne's way

From page 1

Party of Baker County, e-mailed him that afternoon, on December 30, to say he wanted to focus his efforts on the party.

"After much deliberation, I have decided to set aside my personal aspirations for city government, and withdraw my application ... so as to fully focus on my duties as chairman of the Republican Party in this important upcoming election year," wrote Mr. Gravelle.

Ms. Roberson, meanwhile, called the city manager to pull her name from consideration because she applied previously to fill the school board vacancy left by Jesse Davis last summer. He took a new job in the Atlanta area.

Mr. Rhoden said Ms. Roberson fully expected the governor's office to fill the school board post by now, but that's not occurred. Chuck Brannen, who recently retired from the sheriff's office, and Leonard Davis, a former county fire chief and retired civil servant, are also seeking the open school board seat.

"She just wants to serve the community," said Mr. Rhoden, adding Ms. Roberson wants to honor her previous application if she can.

That left Mr. Horne and Mr. Robinson, a former county commissioner, still in the running when the 6 pm meeting began.

"I think Alex [Robinson would have] added a lot of experience and knowledge from serving as county commissioner for I don't know how many years," said the mayor after the appointment was final. "I suppose his down side is, like some of us up here, he's facing the twilight of his life. Mr. Horne has the advantage of being younger and maybe we do need some youth on the board."

The four sitting commissioners — the mayor, Vernon Bennett, Sam Kitching and Mark Bryant — voted for the appointment by circling a name on a paper ballot and folding and passing the ballots to the secretary for tallying.

The process is atypical, at least regarding most city business.

After the first vote ended in a 2-2 tie, Mayor Dopson then called for another anonymous vote to see if the initial outcome would make anyone change their votes, but they didn't, which triggered the coin toss.

After Mr. Horne, who will fill the seat until the next city election in 2015, was sworn in, the mayor shared some advice with the new commissioner.

We print obituaries with a picture free of charge.

"Don't ever let politics decide what your decision is," said Dr. Dopson.

Mr. Horne served on the city's Zoning Adjustment Board and will have to be replaced on that panel. He suggested a friend and former coworker, Leonard Bones, for the unpaid position, saying Mr. Bones was eager to be involved in public service.

Assistant City Manager Roger Yarborough said two new members will be needed for the zoning board, as Ms. Roberson, who also serves there, hopes to step down soon.

According to his application for the commission appointment, Mr. Horne has been involved in the community through his church, Glen Baptist, and youth sports leagues including the Baker County Touchdown Club, YMCA soccer and basketball leagues, and Little League baseball.

He also listed his membership in the National Rifle Association, NHRA drag racing, bass club, and a disabled veterans organization.

The occasion was somewhat of a solemn one due to the death of Mr. Johns in November following a stroke that placed him in the nursing home.

"He will be sorely missed, but we have to move on," said Mayor Dopson at the start of the hearing.



Mr. Powell
MBA degree

Ryan Powell of Macclenny graduated December 14 from Florida State University with a master of business administration (MBA) degree. He is the son of Bobby and Patricia Powell, also of Macclenny.

A 2006 graduate of Baker County High School, Ryan was recently hired as an associate business manager at Winn-Dixie corporate headquarters in Jacksonville. Ryan recently moved back to Baker County and is in the process of building a first home.



Callen Scott Fish
Born December 2

Jonathan and Tiffany Fish of Macclenny are pleased to announce the birth of son Callen Scott on December 2, 2013 at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Jacksonville.

He weighed 8 lbs., 5 oz. and was 21 1/4 inches long. He joins brother Cameron Hugh Fish.

Proud grandparents are Scott and Melissa Norman of Sanderson and Hugh and Barbara Fish of Macclenny.



The Youngs
50th anniversary

Roy and Barbara Young of Glen St. Mary celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on New Years Day. They were married on January 1, 1964 in Columbus, Ohio.

The Youngs lived in Central Florida before retiring to Glen in 2005.

Their niece Chris McCann hosted an early anniversary celebration in Ohio for family and friends, and the couple plans a cruise to further observe the occasion.

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Wildcat players, coaches and others gather for a team photo after winning the First Coast Classic basketball tournament by defeating Trinity Christian on December 28 in the Baker County High School gymnasium.



Charles Ruise Jr. comes in for a lay up.

Host Cats win tournament!

Turn tables on Trinity in championship game

The Wildcat basketball team received a belated Christmas present when it clinched the first-place trophy in the Florida First Coast Classic tournament held at Baker High School by defeating Trinity Christian 61-56 in an exciting final game on December 28.

The team easily rolled through its first two games of the tournament to reach the final against Trinity, which handed the Wildcats their first loss of the season almost three weeks prior. The boys avenged that loss and won the tournament title in a physical game that came down to the final minute.

The Conquerors had the chance to take a one-point lead with 30 seconds remaining in the game, but Jesse Gardner got his hand on the ball and blocked it to shut down Trinity's comeback attempt. Gardner then made both of his free throw attempts after being intentionally fouled to make it a four-point game.

Brandon Lewis then blocked another desperate Trinity three-point attempt with less than 10 seconds remaining. Gardner drained his free throw attempt with seven seconds to go to seal the 61-56 tournament-clinching victory for the Wildcats.

It was a thrilling conclusion to a game that looked like it was going to be a Baker County blowout during much of the third quarter. The Cats led by as much as 11 points in the third frame, but Trinity's shooters began heating up from behind the three-point line. The Conquerors went on a 14-3 run during the quarter with the help of four three-pointers to pull within two points.

The Wildcats never allowed Trinity to capture the lead despite the furious comeback attempt. Tournament MVP Charles Ruise's 23 points helped ensure the victory, but Trinity foul troubles also helped the Wildcats capture the tournament crown. The Cats shot 70 percent from the free throw line and they made more free throws (14) in the game than Trinity attempted (6).

The numerous fouls led to easy points for the Wildcats and catapulted them to be crowned first-place in the tournament.

While the final victory came down to the closing seconds, the

outcomes in the Cats' first two games were never in doubt.

Coach Charles Ruise expressed concern about his team's offensive production after losing two out of three games heading into the tournament. Those worries were soon alleviated when the Wildcats destroyed the visiting Eagle's View Warriors 85-30 on December 26 to pick up their first win in the tournament. The Cats had five double-digit scorers led by Ruise's 17 points. Brian Walton added 16 points and six steals, while Darius Fisher, Gardner and Bryce Wallace each scored 12 points.

The Cats pounced all over the Warriors early and took an 18-0 lead before their opponents even got on the board. They led 24-5 at the end of the first quarter. Except for brief spells in the second and third quarters, Coach Ruise played most of the team's reserve players for much of the remainder of the game.

Baker County once again won in blowout fashion in the following night when they disposed of the Lee Generals 50-28.

The game was relatively close at the end of the first quarter as the Wildcats led 12-6 and Lee's slow half-court offense kept the Cats running away with the game.

That all changed in the second quarter when the Cats out scored the Generals 22-8 with the help of seven forced turnovers to lead 34-14 at halftime.

In the second half, Baker County's offense played keep away from Lee's defense and the Cats did everything they could to waste the clock and seal the win. Gardner finished the game with a team-high 17 points, and Ruise wasn't far behind with 15.

Now, the Wildcats sit with a 10-2 record following the tour-



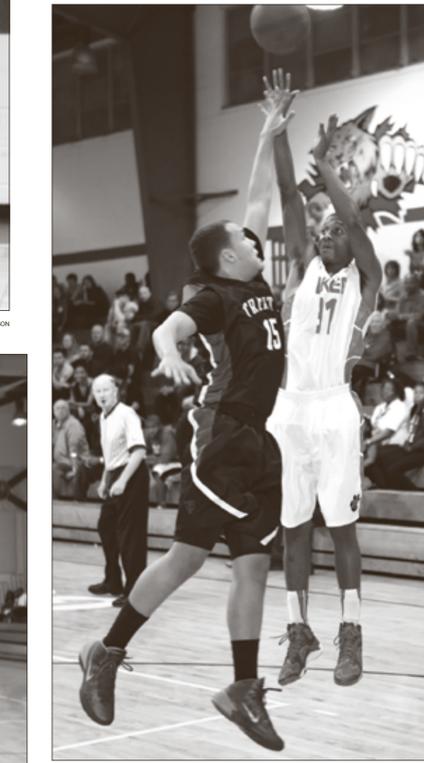
Brian Walton pushes the ball past the defender.



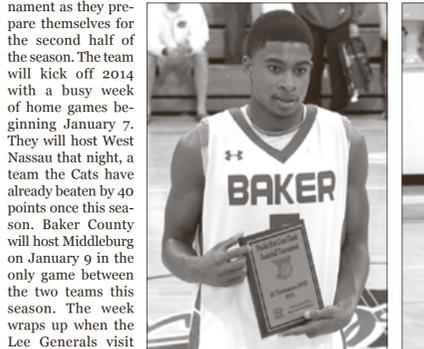
Coach Charles Ruise huddles with his players.



Charles Ruise dunks the basketball.



Brandon Lewis shoots a jumper.



Charles Ruise Jr. with his MVP trophy.



Brian Walton and Jesse Gardner (right) team up to pressure the loose ball.

2013 TOP STORIES IN SPORTS



The BCMS Bobcats football team following their conference championship win last October.

PHOTO BY DEBBE PELHAM

2013 TOP STORIES IN SPORTS

3 conference crowns for BCMS!

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR
jonshu@live.com

Baker County Middle School had an outstanding year in sports as the Bobcats won conference championships in softball, volleyball and football in 2013.

No team was more dominant than the BCMS Bobcat football team that went an undefeated 8-0 en route to winning the Florida Crown Conference championship with a decisive 34-6 victory at Suwannee County on October 24. The conference champions became the third undefeated squad in school history and only the second team in two decades to win the FCC with an unbeaten record.

A mixture of an explosive offense and a shutdown defense allowed the Bobcats to have an average margin of victory of more

than four touchdowns on the season. The defense allowed more than one touchdown in a game just three times, and the team shut out Yulee 46-0 on September 10.

The team's most impressive display of offensive production came in a 74-point explosion in a home conference game against Richardson on October 8. The team scored on all but one of its offensive possessions during the game, and added a touchdown on special teams.

As dominant as the football team was in 2013, they were far from the only great team the middle school fielded.

The Lady Bobcat softball team won its second straight conference title on April 11 with a 10-0 home win over Taylor County with the help of pitcher Macy Jackson's one-walk no-hitter. The shutout title win came after the girls ended their regular season with a 12-1

record.

Not to be outdone by their softball counterparts, the Lady Bobcat volleyball team captured the Florida Crown Conference for the first time in school history when it defeated the visiting Suwannee County on October 17. The girls swept the championship meet 2-0 (25-21, 25-15). The championship victory kept the Lady Bobcats undefeated in conference play and improved their overall record to 11-7.

The middle school's conference championship victories in three sports is an incredible feat. It's a testament to the quality of the coaching staff and the athletic ability of the young players. The high school coaches have to be excited for the influx of talent they'll receive from the middle school in the coming years.



Michael Boone catches a punt.

PHOTO BY JUD JOHNSON



Hunter Hanks slides into base.

PHOTO BY JUD JOHNSON

2013 TOP STORIES IN SPORTS

Boone: goes off to Cincy with honors

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR
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Being named to the All First Coast first-team for football capped off an incredible 2013 for Baker County High School senior Michael Boone.

Boone earned the honor of being named to the first-team due to his play as a wide receiver and return man on Friday nights for the varsity football team. He energized and wowed crowds on a weekly basis with his explosive plays as he finished his senior season with 2,082 all-purpose yards and 22 touchdowns.

His record-breaking performance in the Wildcats' 43-6 win over visiting Bradford on September 6 helped him finish with the gaudy stats that earned him the accolades. Boone caught eight passes for 211 yards to set a new BCHS single-game receiving record. Touchdown receptions of 67, 68 and 35 yards helped the Cincinnati commit surpass former Wildcat and current University of North Carolina Tar Heel

Kendrick Singleton for the new record.

Boone's outstanding football season in the fall was just a continuation of the great year he was already having in the spring on the track.

He set a meet record in the triple jump at the third-annual Swamp Relays in March in Ware County, Ga. He won the event with a hop, skip and jump measuring 46 feet and four-tenths of an inch.

Boone followed that performance up by winning the 2A Region 1 triple jump in late April at The Bolles School. He posted a distance of 45' 8.25" to win the event and advance to the state finals at UNF.

He finished fourth at state in the event with a jump of 45' 5". Boone's final calendar year at Baker County High School will be one that is not soon forgotten. Excelling at two sports the way he did in 2013 proved his athletic ability and displayed his talent and potential to continue to thrive at the collegiate level.

2013 TOP STORIES IN SPORTS

Holton's prowess will carry into '14

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR
jonshu@live.com

Baker County High School softball standout Kylie Holton raked in the awards and nominations as one of Florida's best players at the conclusion of her junior season in the first half of 2013.

Locally, she was named to The Florida Times-Union's All-First Coast softball first-team for her success behind the plate as the Lady Wildcats' catcher.

On the state level, Holton was honored twice by the Florida Athletic Coaches Association (FACA) for her outstanding play during her junior season. She was named the FACA 5A Offensive Player of the Year for her production with a bat, which also helped her be named to the Class 5A All-State first-team.

She destroyed opposing pitchers all year as she set school records for single-season (9) and career (16) home run totals. She batted an incredible .581 on the season and drove in 48 RBIs.

She is already one of the best players in the state, but she has a chance to make an even bigger name for herself when she steps onto the field for her senior year in 2014. If 2013 was any indication, opposing teams are going to be in trouble whenever they face the Lady Cats because of Holton's ability to crush the softball.

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2013 TOP STORIES IN SPORTS

Coach shuffling at BCHS

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR
jonshu@live.com

The past 12 months saw a rash of changes throughout the athletic department at Baker County High School with a number of familiar faces leaving and new people joining the staff. The sheer number of changes and its impact on the school makes it this year's top story.

The most recent departure will be the one that has the longest lasting impact on the school's sports program. Head football and former wrestling coach Ryan Sulkowski accepted a new job with Tennessee's Coffee County Central High School in early December to help rebuild their struggling program.

Although Sulkowski made negative headlines for his off-the-field actions several times this year, there is no denying his talent as a head coach. He won 31 games and captured the District 3-5A crown during his four-year tenure leading the Wildcats. The school is going to have a hard time finding a coach who can step in and repeat the success Sulkowski's teams had on Friday

forming together. The girls won four consecutive state titles before moving on to the national stage. The show twirl team also finished in third place of their respective competition.



Members of the national championship BCHS majorettes.

PHOTO BY COURTESY OF THE BCHS MAJORETTES

2013 TOP STORIES IN SPORTS

Twirlers clinch nationals

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR
jonshu@live.com

The BCHS majorette team brought home the gold medals after placing first at the 2013 High School Dance Twirl National Championships at Notre Dame University in July.

The girls defeated four other teams with an overall score of 168.7, edging out the second-place team by just more than one point to claim the national title. The championship win capped off a long chaotic night as the team performed just before midnight after originally being slated to compete about 1 a.m.

The title was the culmination of five years of performing together. The girls won four consecutive state titles before moving on to the national stage. The show twirl team also finished in third place of their respective competition.

The majorettes have a long history of sending twirlers to the collegiate level to continue their performing careers. The national title win was a perfect conclusion to the high school careers of senior captains Haley Dopson and Jessica Davis, who joined the University of Florida Gatorettes in the fall.

The majorettes' championship brought recognition to Baker County and the high school to people across the country. The continued success of the girls on the state and national level has been another bright spot of the sports year for Baker County.



9-10 year old all-star team from Baker County after winning sectionals. The team went on to finish 5th in the state.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID CRUMMEY

2013 TOP STORIES IN SPORTS

High finish for 9-10 year-olds!

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR
jonshu@live.com

Little League All-Star baseball and softball tournaments filled the sports void of the summer months as the 9 and 10-year old finished in fifth place of the state tournament in late July.

Coach David Crumme's all-star baseball team rolled through the District 11 and Section 3 tournaments en route to advancing to play for the state crown in Mims. Although the boys went 1-2 during the state tournament, they were just one win away from advancing to the final four and they held leads in every game they played.

The team had to rally from behind to earn the 8-6 win over the

mer tournaments. Both the major and senior softball teams won the District 11 championships in front of home crowds at Macclenny's Minger Fields. The 10- and 11-year-old baseball team tore through the district tournament in Yulee as the team out scored its competition 42-8 on its way to winning the district crown.

The 9- and 10-year-old squad's dramatic state run and the success of the other teams makes this one of the top stories of the year. It shows the commitment of the players and their parents to setting up the young players for success, as well as the coaches for volunteering their time and giving back to the community.

The highly sought-after defensive lineman is one of the top prospects in the 2015 class, and being named the All-First Coast Defensive Player of the Year only strengthens his résumé for scouts at the

Apopka squad in the state tournament, which was something the all-star team had become accustomed to doing during the District 11 and Section 3 tournaments. Coach Crumme's team overcame a three-run sixth inning deficit during the district tournament to keep the season alive. They squad responded with an unbelievable 14 runs to win the game and advance them to the District title game.

In the Section 3 tournament, the team sealed an extra innings victory with a double play to hold off a comeback attempt from Indian River City to win 13-12.

The 9 and 10-year old boys all-stars' incredible run to the state tournament wasn't the only impressive showing from Baker County teams during the sum-

2013 TOP STORIES IN SPORTS

'Everyone' looking at CeCe

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR

BCHS star defensive lineman CeCe Jefferson was recognized as the area's top defensive player when he was named The Florida Times-Union's All-First Coast Defensive Player of the Year.

Jefferson has been a dominant force for the Wildcats since stepping on the field for them three years ago, and 2013 was his best season to date. His 15.5 sacks on the season broke his own school record he set during his sophomore campaign. The defensive playmaker also finished the year with 62 tackles and 21 tackles behind the line of scrimmage.

The highly sought-after defensive lineman is one of the top prospects in the 2015 class, and being named the All-First Coast Defensive Player of the Year only strengthens his résumé for scouts at the

next level. He has been offered scholarships from 14 of the top NCAA Football Bowl Division (formerly Division I) in the country, including offers from Alabama, Auburn, Florida, Florida State, Ohio State and USC, according to ESPN.com. He has the potential to be one of the top pass-rushers in the country, and it will be his choice of where he wants to do it.

But before he moves on to playing in the top division of collegiate football, he still has one more season for the Wildcats. With the future uncertain with the search of a new head coach, a player of Jefferson's caliber can help ease the transition and keep the defense playing at the level it did under Coach Sulkowski.

For now Jefferson is recognized as one of the area's best, but it won't be long until he gets that same recognition on a national scale.



CeCe Jefferson heads towards the end zone for a touchdown.

PHOTO BY JUD JOHNSON

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3 BR, 2 BA completely renovated home on large city lot in established neighborhood. FSBO. \$119,500. Contact 904-234-8065. 12/12-1/2/14p

4 BR, 2 BA brick house with approximately 1/2 acre fenced in yard. 7446 Pine Acres Court, Glen St. Mary. Located in quiet neighborhood. \$110,000. Call 259-8595 or 904-612-5279. 12/19tc

5 acres on St. Mary's River, zoned AG; high and dry. Ready to build on; very nice wooded acres. \$54,900; two to pick from. 904-591-2640. 7/18tc

Lots for sale, Copper Creek and Glenfield Oaks subdivisions. \$32,000 each. Call 904-813-1580. 2/7tc

3 BR, 2 BA. 925 Red Fox Way. Carpet, tile and engineered wood floors, 2 car garage, all appliances including washer/dryer. \$107/month plus \$1075 deposit. Real Estate with Garlon Webb. 904-408-9146. 1/2c

2 BR, 2 BA in Country Club Estates. \$850/month. 259-9119. 1/2p

4 BR, 2 BA mobile home in Glen. \$800/month, first and last month's rent, security deposit. 904-728-2885 or 259-8514. 1/2p

3 BR, 2 BA DW mobile home on Mud Lake Road. Newly remodeled; lawn maintenance included. Service animals only. \$900/month plus \$1200 deposit. 259-9066. 12/28tc

3 BR, 1 BA house in Macclenny. \$850/month plus \$700 deposit. 904-238-1908. 12/19-1/2p

3 BR, 2 BA mobile home on Mud Lake Road. CHA; service animals only. \$625/month. 259-4884. 1/2p

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2 BR, 1 BA, CHA, washer/dryer hook-up, garbage, water, sewage, lawn care included. \$450/month plus \$450 deposit. 1st month's rent pro-rated. 912-943-8165 or 904-219-2690. 12/21tc

3 BR, 1 BA house in Macclenny. 170 W. Shuey Avenue. CHA, washer/dryer hook-up, screened back porch, fenced back yard. \$795/month plus \$795 deposit. 259-6488. 12/26-1/2p

4 BR, 2 BA brick house with fenced in yard. 7446 Pine Acres Court, Glen. 1st, last and \$900 deposit required to move in. (\$2700). \$110,000 for sale. Call 259-8595 or 904-612-5279. 12/19tc

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Clean 3 BR, 1 BA home. 9121 Dolphin Street, Sanderson. \$650/month plus \$650 deposit. Call 904-813-1580 or 259-2255. 11/21tc

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CHUCK ROAST
\$2.99 lb.

99¢ ea
3 LB. BAG YELLOW ONIONS

99¢ dz
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NECKBONES
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